

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION



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Cover Letter

August 1, 2011

TO: Governor's Office, Vivian Hammill, Rm. 204, State Capitol, P.O. Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. of Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Director's Office
Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation, 1625 11th Ave. Helena, MT 59620
Director's Office
Information Services Section
Water Resources Division, 1424 9th Ave., P.O. Box 201601, Helena, MT 59620-1601
Scott Irvin, Water Resources Div., Lewistown Office, 613 NE Main, Suite E, Lewistown, MT 59457
Montana Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, 1420 E. 6th Ave. Helena, MT 59620
Director's Office
Ann Tews, DFWP Lewistown Area Office, 2358 Airport Rd., P.O. Box 938, Lewistown, MT 59457
Eugene Taber Jr., Upper Musselshell Water Users Association, P.O. Box 61, Shawmut MT 59078
Montana Environmental Information Center, P.O. Box 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Montana Audubon Council, P.O. Box 595, Helena, MT 59624
Wheatland County Commissioners, 201 A. Ave. NW, Harlowton, MT 59036
Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807
Northern Plains Resource Council, 2401 Montana Ave. Suite 200, Billings, MT 59626-2336
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 10 W. 15th St. Suite 2200, Helena, MT 59626
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, MT Field Office, 585 Shepard Way, Helena, MT 59601

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The enclosed Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Notice has been prepared for the Martinsdale North Dam Drain Monitoring Improvement Project. Please contact James P. Domino at (406) 444-6622 (e-mail jdomino@mt.gov) should you have any questions about the Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Notice or the Final EA. Copies of the Final EA are available upon request. The Final EA can also be viewed on the DNRC website at www.dnrc.mt.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Tim Davis".

Tim Davis
Water Resources Division Administrator

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT / NOTICE OF DECISION

August 1, 2011

Dear Reader:

On June 29, 2011, the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) released a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) on the Martinsdale North Dam Drain Monitoring Improvement Project. Martinsdale North Dam and Reservoir are located in Wheatland County approximately 1 mile southeast of Martinsdale, Montana. The dam is owned by the DNRC and operated and maintained by the Upper Musselshell Water Users Association. The earthfill dam is one of two dams that make up the Martinsdale Project. The North Dam is 91 feet high and has a crest length of 1,000 feet. The North and East Dams were constructed in 1939. The dams impound 23,185 acre-feet of water at full pool. The water is used primarily for agricultural irrigation. Recreation and flood control are also major benefits provided by the reservoir, although no specific allocations to these uses currently exist. Both the North and East Dams are classified as high hazard. A dam is classified as high hazard if failure of the dam would endanger lives and property downstream. This classification is not a reflection of the actual condition of the dam.

This project modifies portions of the existing drain system to improve the measurement of seepage flows and sedimentation rates. Automated reservoir level instrumentation is also to be installed to allow continual monitoring of the reservoir. The repair and improvement of the existing drain system and the installation of automated instrumentation will allow for enhanced monitoring of seepage, sedimentation, reservoir water levels and outflows from the dam. Improved monitoring of these conditions will enhance the early detection of potentially unsafe conditions and reduce the response time needed to correct problems.

The anticipated project start date is September 1, 2011, with the project expected to be complete by November 1, 2011. The funding source is a \$100,000 DNRC Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program grant. In-kind services amount to \$29,525 for a funding total of \$129,525. The construction estimate is approximately \$100,000.

A thirty day comment period was provided, which ended on July 27th, 2011. No public comments were received. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were also consulted and expressed no opposition to the project. Based on the EA's disclosure and analysis of potential impacts, the DNRC concludes that the proposed action will not result in any significant impacts. The DNRC will adopt the draft EA as the final EA and proceed with the preferred alternative. Copies of the Final EA are available upon request. The Final EA can be viewed on the DNRC website at www.dnrc.mt.gov in the Environmental Documents section. Please direct any questions to:

James P. Domino

State Water Projects Bureau
MT DNRC, P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601
(406) 444-6622 e-mail: jdomino@mt.gov

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely



Tim Davis
Water Resources Division Administrator